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(54) **TELECOMMUNICATIONS DATA USAGE MANAGEMENT**

USPC 455/414.1, 405, 406, 407, 419, 420, 455/411, 410

See application file for complete search history.

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H04W 4/24 (2009.01)
H04W 4/26 (2009.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

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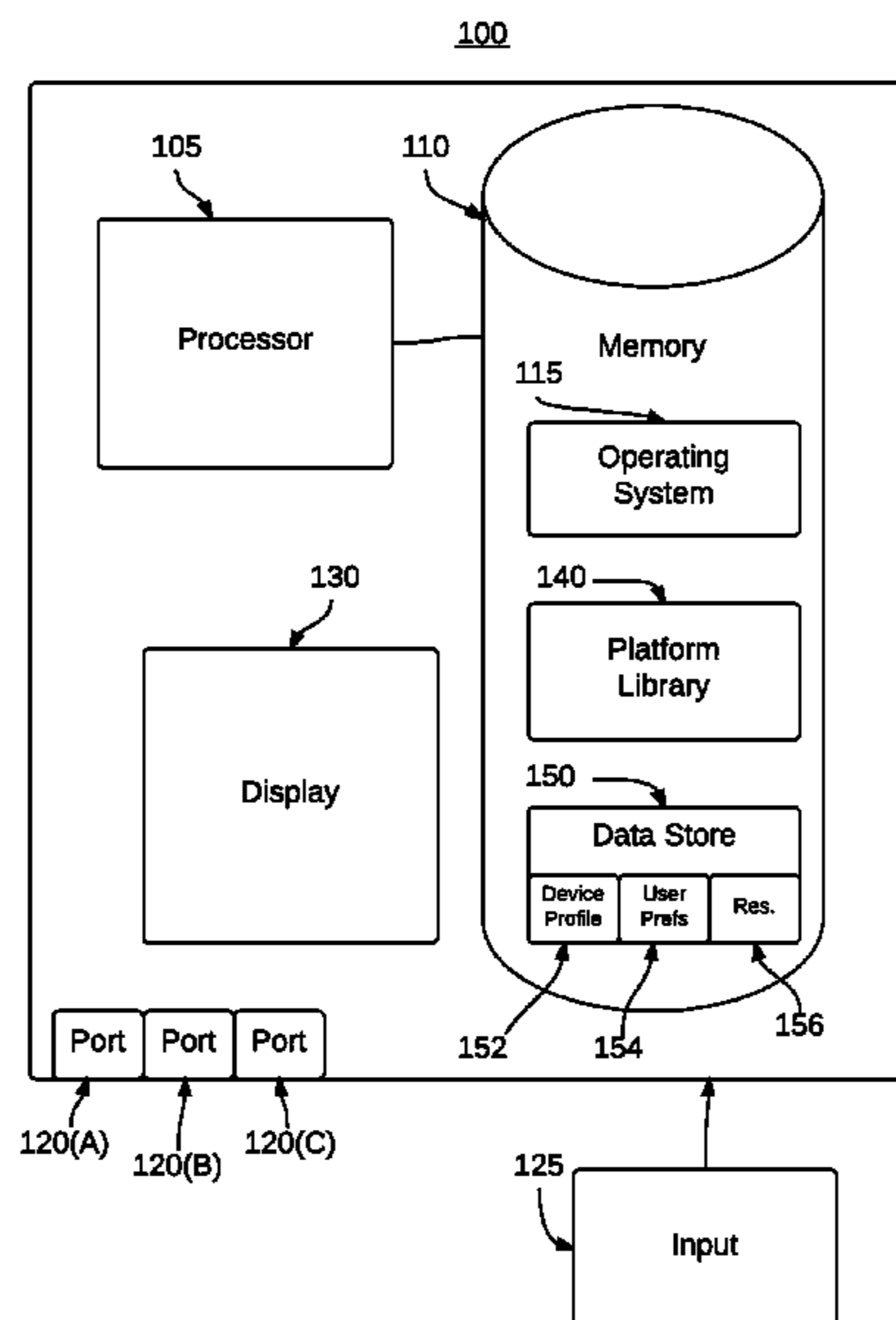
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Telecommunications data usage management may be provided. A network state associated with a communication network may be identified. Upon determining that the network state is not in compliance with a data usage policy, access to the communication network may be restricted for at least one application.

21 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets



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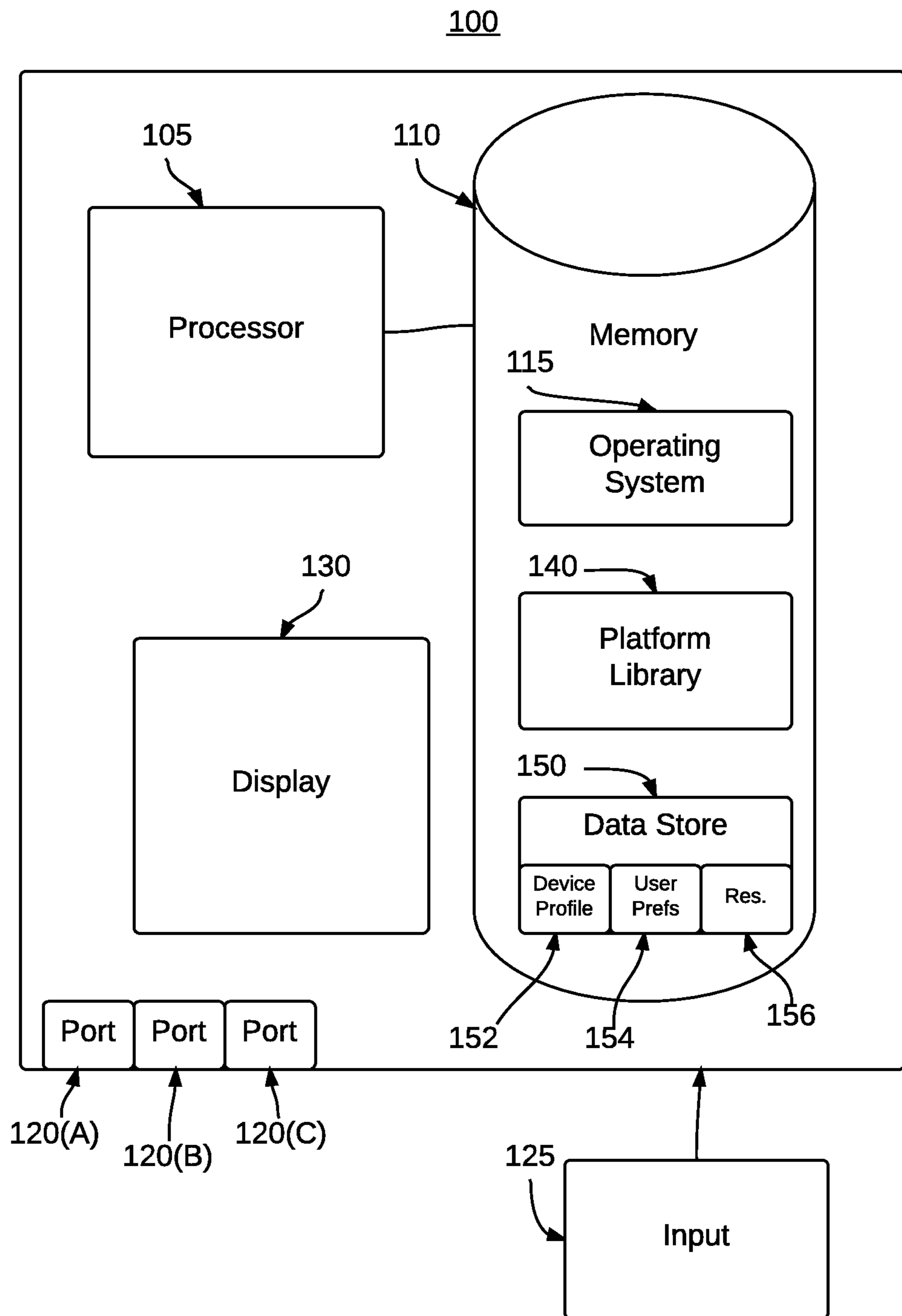


Figure 1

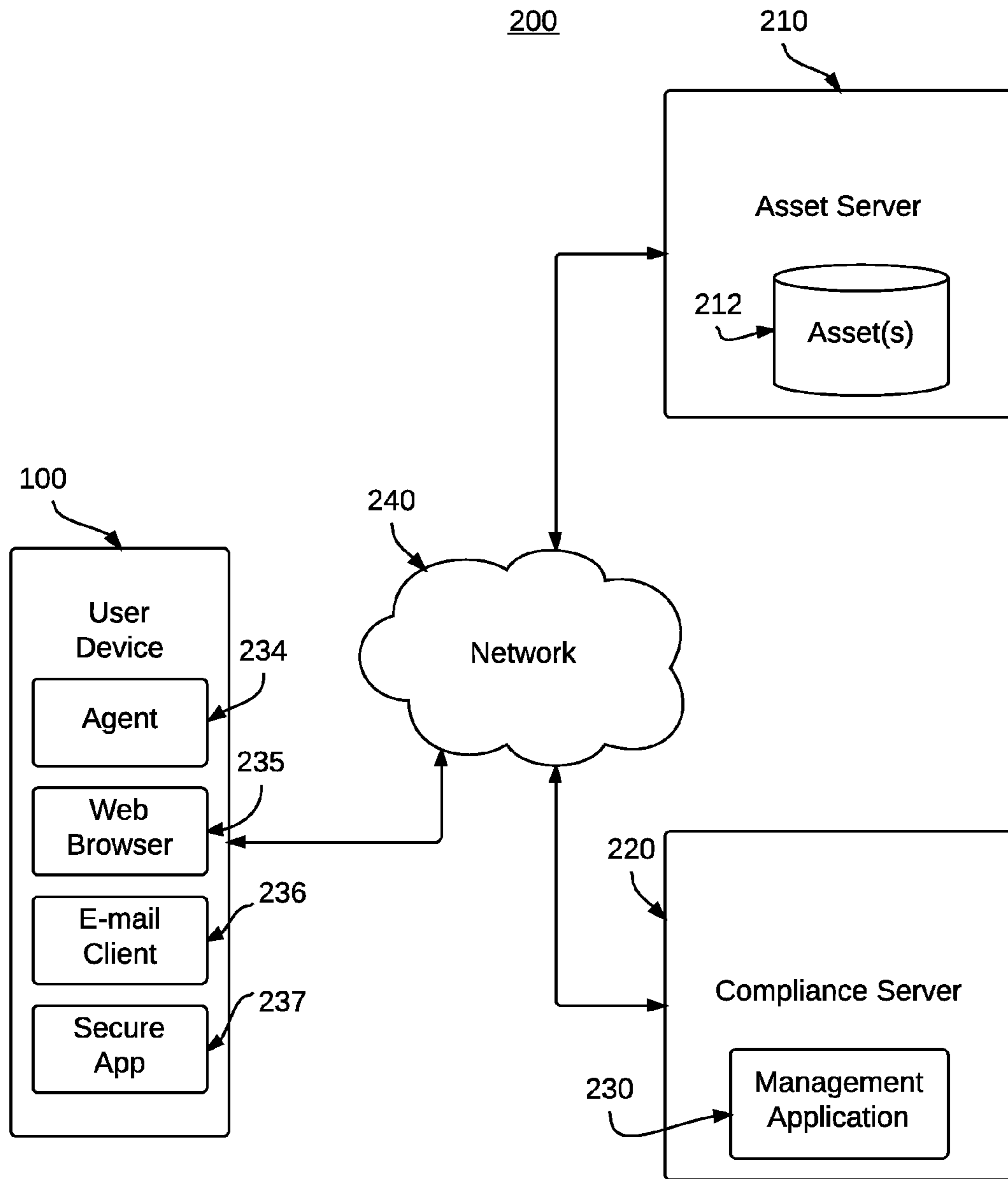


Figure 2

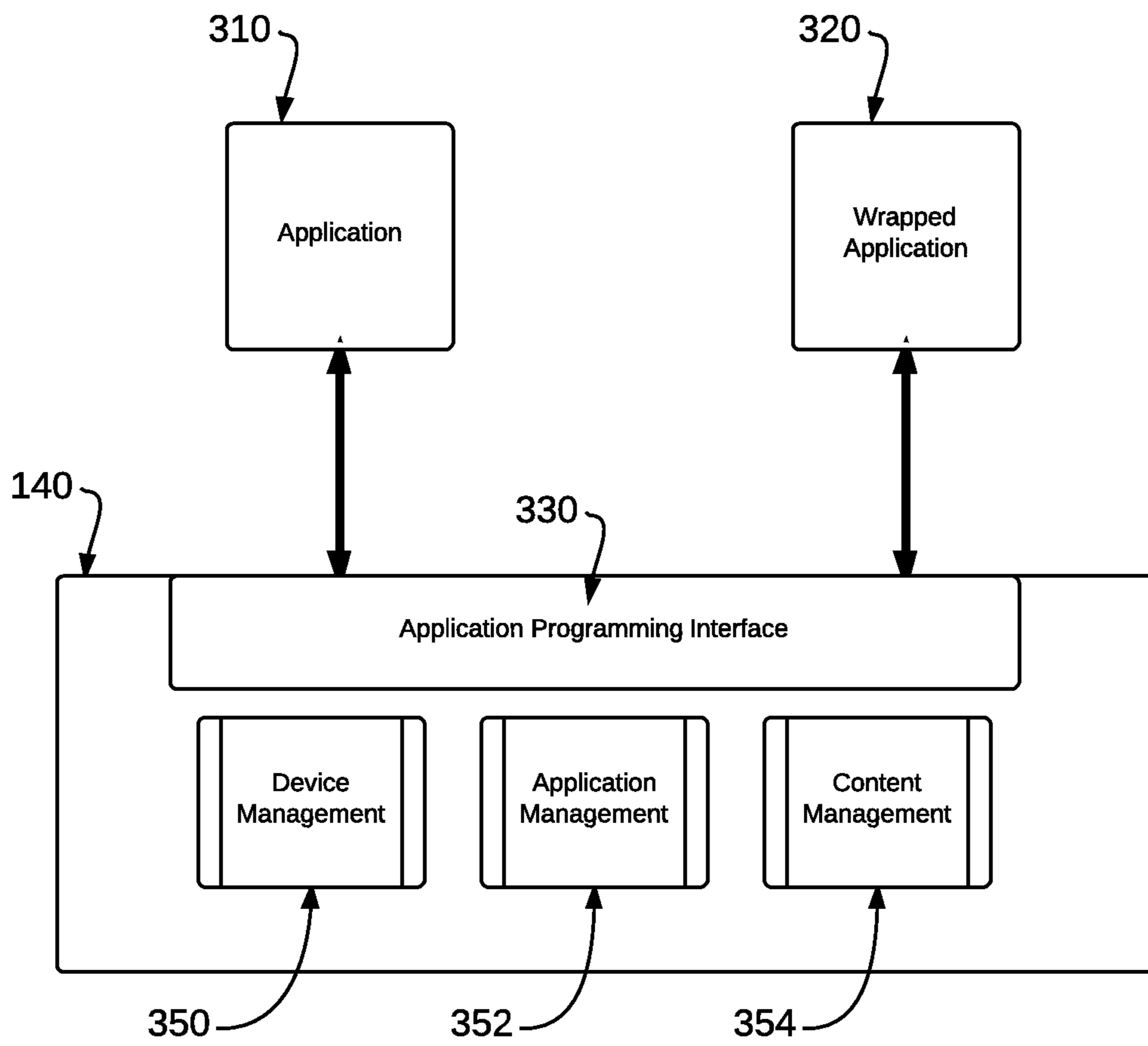


Figure 3

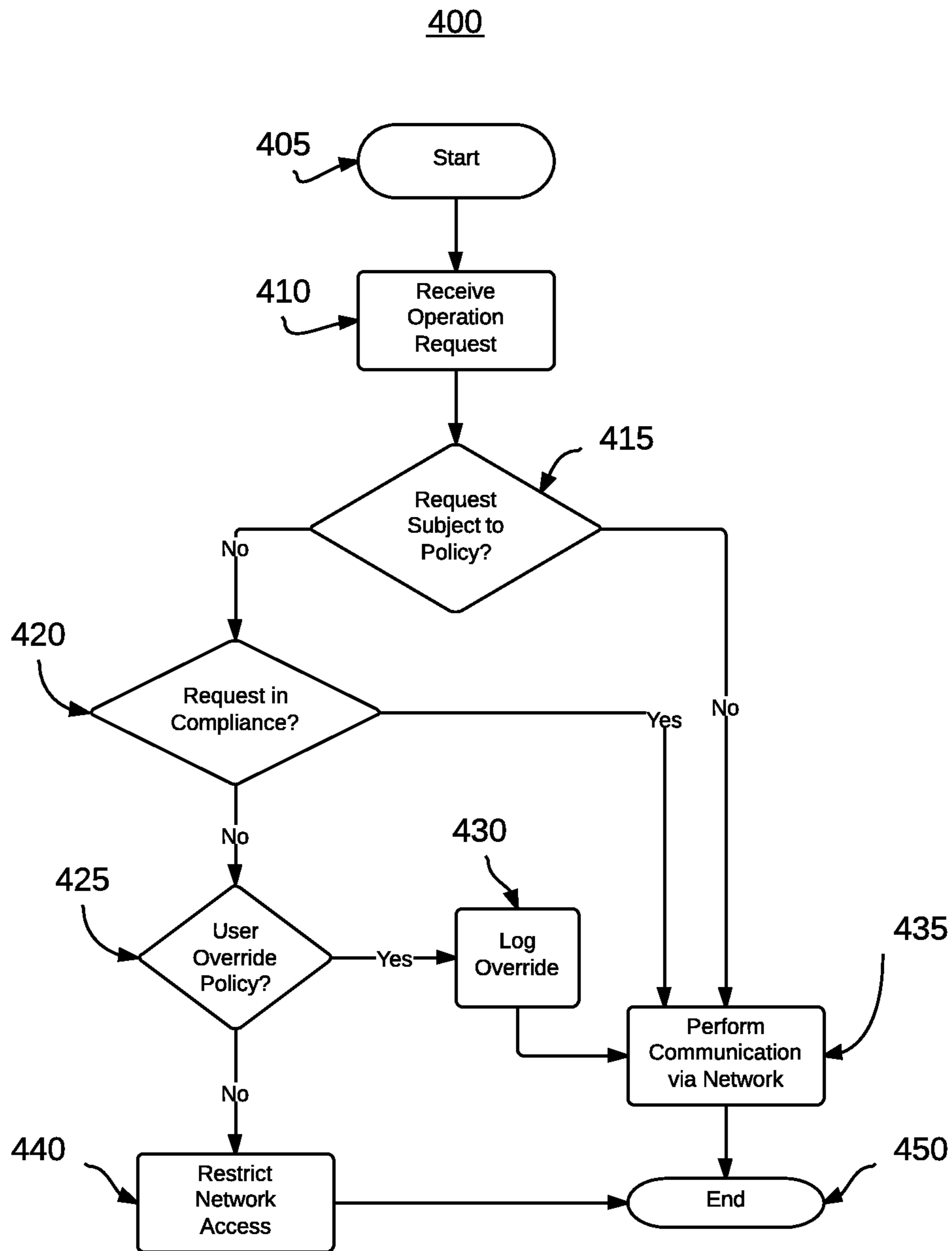


Figure 4

1**TELECOMMUNICATIONS DATA USAGE
MANAGEMENT**

RELATED APPLICATION

This application claims priority as a Continuation-in-Part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/950,486, filed Jul. 25, 2013, which is entitled Device Functionality Management and is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND

Data usage management provides options for controlling the behavior of devices through provision of a software development kit (SDK), application wrapping, and compliance rules. In some situations, applications executing on mobile devices may consume large amounts of data. Since many telecommunications providers allot only a certain amount of data per billing cycle, it is easy for such applications to exceed the allotment and incur additional charges. Similarly, pre-paid plans offer a limited amount of data before additional payments are required. Furthermore, mobile devices operating outside of their home area (e.g., roaming internationally) may also incur significant charges. Additionally, mobile devices are typically battery powered, and network operations, such as receiving and transmitting data, often comprise battery-intensive operations. Conventional approaches simply continue to transmit data and incur additional charges, and allow the device to rapidly deplete its battery power.

SUMMARY

This Summary is provided to introduce a selection of concepts in a simplified form that are further described below in the Detailed Description. This Summary is not intended to identify key features or essential features of the claimed subject matter. Neither is this Summary intended to be used to limit the claimed subject matter's scope.

Telecommunications data usage management may be provided. A network state associated with a communication network may be identified. Upon determining that the network state is not in compliance with a data usage policy, access to the communication network may be restricted for at least one application.

It is to be understood that both the foregoing general description and the following detailed description are examples and explanatory only, and should not be considered to restrict the disclosure's scope, as described and claimed. Further, features and/or variations may be provided in addition to those set forth herein. For example, embodiments of the disclosure may be directed to various feature combinations and sub-combinations described in the detailed description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Many aspects of the present disclosure can be better understood with reference to the following diagrams. The drawings are not necessarily to scale. Instead, emphasis is placed upon clearly illustrating certain features of the disclosure. Moreover, in the drawings, like reference numerals designate corresponding parts throughout the several views. In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a user device;

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of an operating environment for providing data communications management;

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FIG. 3 is a block diagram of a platform library associated with the user device; and

FIG. 4 is a flow chart illustrating a method for telecommunications data usage management.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The following detailed description refers to the accompanying drawings. Wherever possible, the same reference numbers are used in the drawings and the following description to refer to the same or similar elements. While embodiments of the disclosure may be described, modifications, adaptations, and other implementations are possible. For example, substitutions, additions, or modifications may be made to the elements illustrated in the drawings, and the methods described herein may be modified by substituting, reordering, or adding stages to the disclosed methods. Accordingly, the following detailed description does not limit the disclosure. Instead, the proper scope of the disclosure is defined by the appended claims.

Device functionality management may be provided. Specifically, management of metered resources such as data usage and battery power may be optimized to reduce overage charges and prioritize applications as battery power is depleted. In some embodiments, methods, systems, and/or apparatuses may be provided to aid in ensuring that a device's data plan/subscription does not run out or exceed a monthly allocation. In some embodiments, methods, systems, and/or apparatuses may be provided to preserve battery life and aid in ensuring that the battery level does not run out. For example, features that are battery/data intensive, such as data transmission protocols, global positioning services, etc. may be restricted to wireless rather than cellular networks and/or home regions rather than areas in which a mobile device may be subject to a roaming surcharge.

In some situations, a phased approach for controlling telecom costs may be provided. These phased cost controls may range from less to more restrictive in the interest of efficiently providing corporate resources to mobile devices. For example, controls may comprise any and/or all of the following: allowing a user to acknowledge and/or approve the download of messages that exceed a certain size when on cellular connections, forcing attachments to be downloaded on Wi-Fi only if they exceed a certain size, force manual data synchronization (e.g., the user must open the client) while device is roaming, forcing attachments to be downloaded on Wi-Fi only while the device is roaming, force synchronization over Wi-Fi only when the device has used more than an allocated amount of data per day, and/or forcing use of Wi-Fi only for multiple data operations. Other controls may comprise reducing data requirements by downloading partial data objects, such as the headers and/or subject of emails.

In some embodiments, compliance and management rules may be used to aid in the reduction of telecommunications expenses. For example, roaming and/or international data usage charges may be reduced by controlling the network traffic. Traffic rules may comprise usage and/or cost caps for a given time period, such as a daily or monthly basis, or for a predefined duration, such as during a particular travel period. For example, compliance rules may allow unlimited retrieval and sending of company email during an international trip, but restrict web traffic for the same period. Other compliance rules may comprise periodic evaluations of services associated with a mobile device and reporting out of cost efficiency. For example, a user's mobile device may be associated with an international calling feature that carries a monthly fee, but an evaluation of the user's activity may reveal no international

calls in a threshold period. In such a case, the feature may be automatically disabled and/or reported to a telecom administrator for action.

In some embodiments, wi-fi network access may be restricted to subscribers to a particular service and/or those who agree to pay an access rate and/or sign a license agreement. Cost analysis may determine whether data requirements may result in higher costs for using cellular and/or roaming data as opposed to paying for wireless access, either on an as-needed or a subscription basis. Further, determinations may be made as to whether particular wi-fi network access points are associated with an existing access allowance and/or license agreement. Such existing access may result in greater efficiency and convenience to the user, as the device may connect to such an access point without the user's intervention, authorization, or review and acceptance of a license agreement.

In some embodiments, existing applications may be configured to take advantage of lower cost data access. For example, upon connecting to a wireless network, a phone application may switch to using Voice over IP (VOIP) to make calls rather than cellular calls. This may be done without interaction with the user and/or the user may be notified, such as through an alert, modification of the application's icon or interface, or other tactile, visual and/or audio notification mechanism. Furthermore, in some embodiments, a user may be required to acknowledge and/or accept responsibility for additional charges to override the use of a lower cost network.

In some embodiments, mobile devices may be provided with greater carrier integration to enable and/or disable features and plans as needed. For example, a mobile device may prompt a user to update their plan settings upon detection of the user's presence within a travel hub, such as a cruise port or airport. For another example, a mobile device may determine that the user of the mobile device is about to travel internationally based on application data (e.g., travel itineraries in an airline's app) or other documents (e.g., email from a travel agent) and automatically enable an international data plan appropriate to the projected amount of data that will be consumed over the duration of the trip. Such projections may be based on the user's personal trends and past behaviors and/or upon averages across multiple users in a similar role within the enterprise.

Other settings may also be put into place to reduce costs when traveling and/or roaming, such as conversion of data traffic into different formats. For example, text messages may be intercepted by a management console and/or telecom carrier and converted into emails. Such a conversion reduces both the per text cost often applied, and allows for the message to be retrieved when data traffic costs may be minimized, such as when the mobile device is on a wireless network rather than using a roaming cellular network. Similarly, phone calls, text messages, and other data communications may be configured to be forwarded to another mobile device while a user's primary mobile device is outside of its home region. For example, a user may be issued a temporary mobile phone with international access from a pool of enterprise devices.

The technical effects of some embodiments of this disclosure may include establishing control of access to networks and assets when access lists may not be predefined, and reducing and/or eliminating the burden of predefining access lists to control access to networks and assets. Moreover, the technical effects of some embodiments may include enhancing network access control by assigning specific access rights based on access lists to client devices authorized to access associated network beacons and assets.

Other technical effects of some embodiments of this disclosure may offer group management solutions to managing content access and distribution. For example, users of a sales group may have read access to marketing documents and presentations, while users in a marketing group may be able to edit and/or annotate the market documents. Similarly, users in an accounting or business services group may be the only ones with access to enterprise financial documents. These access controls may be provided by distributing authorization credentials to devices associated with users of the respective group. Each user may then authenticate to their device, such as by inputting a username, password, authentication key, and/or biometric data, before the device may access and/or retrieve the content authorized for distribution to that device. These authentication types are provided as examples only and are not intended to be limiting as many other types of user authentication are in use and/or may be contemplated in the future.

Content access may be further limited by policies that enforce other compliance restrictions based on properties of the device such as time, location, device security and/or integrity, presence of another device, software versions, required software, etc. For example, educational settings may designate student and instructor groups. These groups may be further assigned to specific classes such that only student group members associated with a given class may access content associated with that class. Further, edit access to the content for the class may be restricted to the user(s) in the instructor group and/or student group members may be permitted to add content that only the instructor may view (e.g., homework assignments.) In some embodiments, the instructor group user(s) may be able to push content to student group user(s) and/or activate temporary control of the students' devices to prevent the devices from accessing non-class related content during class time.

To reduce the cost of ownership of user devices and cellular and/or data service charges associated with use of such user devices, an enterprise such as an educational institution and/or a business may implement a "bring your own device" (BYOD) policy to allow an employee to use his/her personal device to access enterprise assets rather than provide the user with an enterprise owned user device for such purpose. To support such a BYOD policy, a user device administrator (i.e. IT administrator) may manage a group of personally owned user devices, via a management application executed by a management server in communication with the user devices over a network, to provide the user devices with secure access to enterprise assets.

The user device administrator may enroll user devices into the management system to monitor the user devices for security vulnerabilities and to configure the user devices for secure access to enterprise assets. The user device administrator may create and/or configure at least one configuration profile via a user interface provided by the management system. A configuration profile may comprise a set of instructions and/or settings that configure the operations and/or functions of a user device, which may ensure the security of the accessed assets. The user device administrator may, for instance, configure an enterprise email configuration profile by specifying the network address and access credentials of an enterprise email account that the users of the user devices are authorized to access. Other configuration policies may include, but are not limited to, hardware, software, application, function, cellular, text message, and data use restrictions, which may be based at least in part on the current time and/or location of the restricted user device. The user device administrator may thereafter deploy the configuration pro-

files to specific user devices, such as to groups of user devices of users with similar roles, privileges and/or titles.

Access credentials may uniquely identify a client device and/or the user of the client device. For example, the access credentials for a user may comprise a username, a password, and/or biometric data related to facial recognition, retina recognition, fingerprint recognition, and the like. Access credentials related to a device may uniquely identify the device and may comprise, for example, a unique hardware identifier such as a GUID (Globally Unique Identifier), UUID (Universally Unique Identifier), UDID (Unique Device Identifier), serial number, IMEI (Internationally Mobile Equipment Identity), Wi-Fi MAC (Media Access Control) address, Bluetooth MAC address, a CPU ID, and/or the like, or any combination of two or more such hardware identifiers. Additionally, the access credentials may be represented by a unique software identifier such a token or certificate, based at least in part on the aforementioned unique hardware identifiers.

The user devices may also have access to personal configuration profiles that may be created by the users of the user devices. The user devices may, for instance, have access to a personal email configuration profile that was created by a user of the user device to provide access to her personal email account. Thus, a user device enrolled in a BYOD management system may have more than one configuration profile for a given use of the user device, such as a personal email configuration profile and an enterprise email configuration profile that are both used for accessing email accounts on the user device.

The user devices may be instructed to enable and/or disable certain configuration profiles according to authorization rights specified by the user device administrator, such as location and/or time-based authorization rights. For example, a BYOD policy may specify that user devices enrolled in the BYOD management system are authorized for personal use outside of the workday and are authorized for business use during the workday. Similarly, a BYOD device may be restricted to enterprise uses while in work locations and/or prohibited from accessing enterprise assets while outside of secure work locations. To implement such a policy, a user device administrator may instruct the user devices to toggle between personal configuration policies and enterprise configuration policies based on factors such as the current time and/or location associated with the user device.

The current time may be based on the current time at the current location of the user device, which may be determined by GPS, Wi-Fi, Cellular Triangulation, etc., or may be based on the current time at a configured primary location associated with the user device, which may be the primary office location of an employee user of the user device. As an example, time-based configuration profile toggling may be provided by instructing a user device to enable business configuration profiles and disable personal configuration profiles while the current time is between 9 AM and 5 PM at the current location of the user device, and to disable business configuration profiles and enable personal configuration profiles while the current time is between 5 PM and 9 AM at the current location of the user device.

Consistent with embodiments of this disclosure, control over metered resources may be provided. Metered resources may comprise, for example, hardware resources, software resources, data resources, and/or power resources. Hardware resources may comprise, for example, access to hardware components, peripheral devices, processing time, memory, and/or processor cores and/or threads. Software resources may comprise, for example, data, programmatic functionality, and/or device drivers. Data resources may comprise stor-

age amounts, access to particular data, certificates for authentication, and/or data transmission and reception resources. Power resources may comprise usage of a device's power supply, whether it comprise battery power and/or outside power.

For example, a request to download a large file may be recognized as consuming a large amount of metered data. User device **100** may comprise a limited amount of pre-paid data and/or may receive a periodic allotment of data from a data service provider (e.g., two gigabytes per month). Exceeding the pre-paid or allocated data may then incur a charge for additional data resources. As a user consumes the metered data, compliance and/or cost control policies may identify actions that may use the metered data and respond accordingly, such as by prioritizing requests for use of the metered resource and/or forbidding the performance of actions that may use large amounts and/or a large percentage of the remaining metered resource.

In some embodiments, non-approved applications may be limited and/or prohibited from consuming metered resources. For example, game applications that consume metered data may be prevented from using data during work hours, or if a certain threshold of data usage has been reached. In some embodiments, the threshold may be statically defined, such as by prohibiting certain applications (either specifically or as a categorical group) from using more than 10% of a monthly data quota. In some embodiments, the threshold may be dynamic, such as by pro-rating the amount of data the application may consume on a periodic (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, etc.) basis and/or reducing the amount of data the application may consume as a monthly data quota is neared.

In some embodiments, a management server may attempt to communicate with a mobile device, such as by requesting that the device check-in with the management server. If the management server does not receive a response from the device, or the management server receives a response that the device has insufficient data remaining, the management server may send a message to the device to ask/instruct a user of the device to replenish the data plan to a sufficient level and/or authorize the device to exceed the data allocation, possibly at an additional cost. In some embodiments, the management server may integrate with a carrier associated with the mobile device to an extent to allow the management server to request that the carrier replenish the data plan to a sufficient level on behalf of the user of the device. In some embodiments, in response to a failure to replenish the data plan by either the user of the device or the carrier, the management server may send a message to the device to prohibit the device from using data-intensive features until the data plan is replenished. For example, the device may be limited to wi-fi only data operations once data level drops below configurable level.

In some embodiments, a management server may attempt to communicate with a mobile device, such as by requesting that the device check-in with the management server. If the management server does not receive a response from the device, or the management server receives a response that the device has insufficient battery power remaining, the management server may send a message to the device instructing the user of the device to replenish the battery to a sufficient level. In response to a failure to replenish the battery, the management server may send a message to the device to prohibit the device from using battery-intensive features until the battery is replenished.

In some embodiments, different data transmission protocols may be enabled based on various conditions, such as availability of resources, time and location of a device.

Because cellular data tends to be more expensive than wireless networking data, restricting cellular usage until necessary is desirable to control the cost of network usage. For instance, if content is required to be distributed to a device in 7 days (such as for flight manuals for FAA required monthly updates), then the device may be restricted to downloading the content over wi-fi for the next 6 days. If the device does not come into contact with a wi-fi network within the 6 day window, the device may toggle to enable cellular transmission of the content on the last day to ensure that the legally required documents are on the device before the required date.

In some embodiments, control of the transmission protocol enabled for distribution of content and/or assets may be based on the location of the device. Public wi-fi networks may be untrusted, for example, subjecting a device to potential security risks. Non-native, or roaming, cellular networks may be similarly susceptible to potential security risks. Additionally, charges related to accessing “guest” wi-fi networks and “roaming” cellular networks may apply. Location-based policies may be configured for which transmission protocols are allowed. For example, a device in the USA may be allowed to use any wi-fi network, including public and/or guest wireless networks, such as those at coffee shops and hotels, whereas the same device, while in other countries, may not be allowed to use public wi-fi networks because of the potential threats to asset security. Similarly, the device may be only be allowed to access roaming cellular networks in specific countries, due to costs and/or concern over the security of regional cellular carriers. In some embodiments, toggling between cellular and wi-fi data may be associated with a learned configuration. For example, the configuration may take into account a user’s past movements to determine whether the device is likely to be on a secure wi-fi network in time. The configuration may also take the size of the data chunk to be downloaded into account to ensure the toggle is made in time before the info is needed. In some embodiments, an option to ask the user whether to proceed if data roaming charges will apply or a large amount of data will be required may be presented for approval and/or confirmation. In some embodiments, application use may be disabled unless wi-fi network access and/or a virtual private network (VPN) is enabled. This may be used in conjunction with other network tunneling techniques, such as where an application routes network traffic through a security or management server.

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a user device **100** comprising a processor **105** and a memory **110**. Depending on the configuration and type of device, memory **110** may comprise, but is not limited to, volatile (e.g. random access memory (RAM)), non-volatile (e.g. read-only memory (ROM)), flash memory, or any combination. Memory **110** may store executable programs and related data components of various applications and modules for execution by user device **100**. Memory **110** may be coupled to processor **105** for storing configuration data and operational parameters, such as commands that are recognized by processor **105**.

Basic functionality of user device **100** may be provided by an operating system **115** contained in memory **100**. One or more programmed software applications may be executed by utilizing the computing resources in user device **100**. Applications stored in memory **110** may be executed by processor **105** (e.g., a central processing unit or digital signal processor) under the auspices of operating system **115**. For example, processor **105** may be configured to execute applications such as web browsing applications, email applications, instant messaging applications, and/or other applications capable of receiving and/or providing data.

Data provided as input to and generated as output from the application(s) may be stored in memory **110** and read by processor **105** from memory **110** as needed during the course of application program execution. Input data may be data stored in memory **110** by a secondary application or other source, either internal or external to user device **100**, or possibly anticipated by the application and thus created with the application program at the time it was generated as a software application program. Data may be received via any of a plurality of communication ports **120(A)-(C)** of user device **100**. Communication ports **120(A)-(C)** may allow user device **100** to communicate with other devices, and may comprise components such as an Ethernet network adapter, a modem, and/or a wireless network connectivity interface. For example, the wireless network connectivity interface may comprise one and/or more of a PCI (Peripheral Component Interconnect) card, USB (Universal Serial Bus) interface, PCMCIA (Personal Computer Memory Card International Association) card, SDIO (Secure Digital Input-Output) card, NewCard, Cardbus, a modem, a wireless radio transceiver, and/or the like.

User device **100** may also receive data as user input via an input component **125**, such as a keyboard, a mouse, a pen, a stylus, a sound input device, a touch input device, a capture device, etc. A capture device may be operative to record user(s) and capture spoken words, motions and/or gestures, such as with a camera and/or microphone. The capture device may comprise any speech and/or motion detection device capable of detecting the speech and/or actions of the user(s).

Data generated by applications may be stored in memory **110** by the processor **105** during the course of application program execution. Data may be provided to the user during application program execution by means of a display **130**. Consistent with embodiments of this disclosure, display **130** may comprise an integrated display screen and/or an output port coupled to an external display screen.

Memory **110** may also comprise a platform library **140**. Platform library **140** may comprise a collection of functionality useful to multiple applications, such as may be provided by an application programming interface (API) to a software development kit (SDK). These utilities may be accessed by applications as necessary so that each application does not have to contain these utilities thus allowing for memory consumption savings and a consistent user interface. The platform library **140** may also provide functionality associated with app-wrapping, defined herein as applications that have been modified to add additional functionality. For example, an existing game application may be wrapped to provide support for compliance rules such as those that prohibit the application from executing during work hours. The platform library **140** is described in greater detail below with respect to FIG. 3.

Furthermore, embodiments of this disclosure may be practiced in conjunction with a graphics library, other operating systems, or any other application program and is not limited to any particular application or system. The devices described with respect to the Figures may have additional features or functionality. For example, user device **100** may also include additional data storage devices (removable and/or non-removable) such as, for example, magnetic disks, optical disks, or tape (not shown).

User device **100** may comprise a desktop computer, a laptop computer, a personal digital assistant, a cellular telephone, a set-top box, a music player, a web pad, a tablet computer system, a game console, and/or any other device with like capability.

User device **100** may store in a data store **150** a device profile **152** and a plurality of user preferences **154**. Device profile **152** may comprise an indication of the current position of user device **100** and/or indications of the hardware, software, and security attributes which describe user device **100**. For instance, device profile **152** may represent hardware specifications of user device **100**, version and configuration information of various software program and hardware components installed on user device **100**, data transmission protocols enabled on user device **100**, version and usage information of various assets stored on user device **100**, and/or any other attributes associated with the state of user device **100**. The device profile **152** may further comprise data indicating a date of last virus scan of user device **100**, a date of last access by an IT representative, a date of last service by the IT representative, and/or any other data indicating maintenance and usage of user device **100**. Furthermore, the device profile **152** may comprise indications of the past behavior of associated users, such as assets accessed, charges for asset accesses, and the inventory accessed from such assets. User preferences **154** may comprise a listing of factors that may affect the experience of the user. In particular, user preferences **154** may include indications of the user's age, gender, bodily traits, preferred asset types, preferred venue assets, and combinations thereof.

User device **100** may also store at least one asset **156** in the data store **150**. Assets **156**, for instance, may include any electronic data, such as databases, applications, text files, word processor files, spreadsheet files, presentation files, graphic files, audio files, photographic files, video files, applications and application files, and/or the like. More specifically, assets **156** may include at least one of the following file types: data files, audio files, video files, three-dimensional image files, raster image files, vector image files, page layout files, spreadsheet files, database files, executable files, CAD files, web files, plug-in files, font files, system files, settings files, encoded files, compressed files, disk image files, developer files, backup files, and/or any other files.

The user device **100** may further be configured to execute various applications. For example, the user device **100** may be configured to execute applications such as web browsing applications, email applications, instant messaging applications, and/or other applications capable of receiving and/or rendering assets **156** on display **130**. Any applications capable of receiving and/or rendering assets **156** on display **130** are generally referred to herein as a "client side application". The client side application(s) may be stored in the memory of the user device **100**. In some embodiments, a client side application may comprise a secure container program that may be authorized to receive and render selected assets **156**. The secure container program may further contain a decryption key specific to a distribution service that enables the secure container program to decrypt assets **156** transmitted by the distribution service that have been encrypted by the distribution service to prevent unauthorized programs from accessing the assets **156** on the user device **100**.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram view of an operating environment **200** comprising user device **100** in communication with an asset server **210**, which may provide one or more asset(s) **215**, and a compliance server **220**, which may provide a management application **230**, via a network **240**. User device **100**, asset server **210**, and/or compliance server **220** may be operative to communicate via network **240**. In some embodiments, management application **230** may be operative to execute on user device **100** and/or asset server **210**.

The compliance server **220** may comprise, for example, cloud-based solutions, server computers and/or any other

system providing device management capability. For purposes of convenience, the compliance server **220** is referred to herein in the singular, although it is understood that a plurality of servers may be employed in the arrangements as described herein. Furthermore, in some embodiments, multiple compliance servers **220** may operate on the same server computer. The components executed on the compliance server **220**, for example, may comprise various applications, services, processes, systems, engines, or functionality not disclosed in detail herein.

The compliance server **220** may comprise management application **230** comprising a plurality of compliance rules and/or policies that may be applicable to user device **100**. While the management application **230** is shown as within the compliance server **220**, the management application **230** may alternately be within the user device **100** and/or remotely located on the asset server **210** and may be remotely updated periodically by compliance server **220** according to common over-the-air (OTA) updating methods. Attempts by user device **100** to perform certain functionality on user device **100** may require user device **100** to be in compliance with one and/or more of the compliance policies/rules. Depending on the sensitivity of a given functionality, different compliance rules may be necessary to ensure that the functionality is adequately restricted. Some functionality may only require ensuring that the proper user is requesting the functionality. Other assets may require compliance with more stringent authorization rules, such as determining whether the functionality is restricted during certain time windows. Accordingly, user device **100** and/or compliance server **220** may be operative to determine whether the user of user device **100** is authorized to perform requested functionality at the time the user requests to perform such functionality.

Compliance server **220** may use the compliance rules to impose hardware restrictions regarding the use of specific wireless devices and specific wireless device features, such as, for instance, cameras, Bluetooth, IRDA, tethering, external storage, a mobile access point, and/or other hardware restrictions. The compliance rules may also impose software restrictions such as the use of specific wireless device operating systems or applications, internet browser restrictions, screen capture functionality, and/or other software restrictions. Mobile device management restrictions included in the compliance rules may comprise encryption requirements, firmware versions, remote lock and wipe functionalities, logging and reporting features, GPS tracking, and/or other mobile device management features.

The compliance server **220** may determine whether the device characteristics of a requesting device (e.g. user device **100**) satisfy one or more of the restrictions enumerated in the compliance rules. For example, the compliance server **220** may determine that a requesting device that has a camera, Bluetooth capability, and is executing a specified version of an operating system is compliant with the compliance rules. As another example, the compliance server **220** may determine that a requesting device that is associated with an external storage unit and has screen capture functionality enabled is not compliant with the compliance rules.

In some embodiments, an agent application **234** executed on user device **100** may make the compliance determination based on the device profile, credentials, and/or user preferences. For instance, the agent application **234** may monitor calls by applications, such as a client application **235**, and/or a secure application **236**, on user device **100** to the operating system **115** of user device **100** to determine whether user device **100** seeks to perform functionality associated with one and/or more of the compliance rules described above. Addi-

tionally, the agent application **234** on user device **100** may approve and/or deny the associated functionality requests. For instance, the agent application **234** may instruct operating system **115** on user device **100** to disable the camera of user device **100** in response to a determination that a compliance rule specifies that the camera cannot be used at the time of the request by the user device **100** to operate the camera.

In some embodiments, the agent application **234** executed on user device **100** may rely on compliance server **220** to determine whether a given functionality request on user device **100** is permitted according to the compliance rules. For instance, the agent application may transmit a functionality request, a device profile, credentials, and/or user preferences to compliance server **220** so that compliance server **220** may determine whether user device **100** seeks to perform functionality that may violate a given compliance rule. Additionally, compliance server **220** may approve and/or deny the associated functionality requests. For instance, compliance server **220** may instruct the agent application **234** on user device **100** to instruct operating system **115** to activate a VPN security profile prior to opening a document and/or link.

In some embodiments, the compliance rules may comprise device settings and/or executable instructions that define which functionality the operating system **115** of user device **100** is authorized to perform. Furthermore, the compliance rules may comprise a list of functions, such as those provided by APIs associated with operating system **115** and/or platform library **140**, that may be treated as protected functions. Calls to these functions, such as calls to retrieve login credentials, may result in checks by user device **100** and/or compliance server **220** for compliance with the compliance rules.

In some embodiments, the agent **234** may perform a set of ordered operations to accomplish a requested function. These operation sets may be defined by the user device **100** and/or compliance server **220** and may comprise one and/or more operations to determine whether the user device **100** is in compliance with policies from policy store **230**. The agent **234** may control at least one respective computing resource of the user device **100**. The operations may include configuring at least one respective computing resource of the user device **100** such as restricting access to at least one asset managed by the agent **234**.

The Network **240** may comprise, for example, any type of wired and/or wireless network such as a wireless local area network (WLAN), a wireless wide area network (WWAN), Ethernet, fiber-optic network, and/or any other type of wired and/or wireless network now known or later developed. Additionally, the Network **240** may be or include the Internet, intranets, extranets, microwave networks, satellite communications, cellular systems, PCS, infrared communications, global area networks, or other suitable networks, etc., or any combination of such networks.

FIG. 3 is a block diagram illustrating greater detail regarding the platform library **140**. An application **310** and/or a wrapped application **320** may communicate with platform library **140** via a plurality of function calls comprising an application programming interface (API) **330**. In some embodiments, application **310** and wrapped application **320** may utilize the same calls. In some embodiments, application **310** and wrapped application **320** may utilize different versions of the function calls despite being associated with the same and/or similar functionality. The function calls may allow the applications to access various features and functionality provided by the platform library **140**, such as a set of device management functions **350**, a set of application management functions **352**, and/or a set of content management functions **354**.

Application **310** may comprise an application that has been modified at the source code level to incorporate calls associated with a software development kit (SDK). The SDK may provide a set of function calls that may be incorporated via a library during the application's compile step and may then call out to API **330**.

Wrapped application **320** may comprise a modified binary executable file. The modifications may comprise the injection of precompiled functions to an existing application that may call out to API **330**. In some embodiments, app-wrapping may be accomplished dynamically upon installation and/or execution of an application without requiring recompilation of the application's source code. App-wrapping may thus comprise a preferred and/or more convenient means of modifying an application for which the source code is unavailable.

In some embodiments, compliance rules such as those provided by compliance server **220** may control which functions of API **330** are enabled and/or used in application **310** and wrapped application **320**. For example, users in a sales group may be permitted by compliance server **220** to download an enterprise's expense submitting application without modification, while users in an accounting group may receive a modified version of the same application. The modified version may rely on functionality provided by platform library **140** to enhance the application's security, such as by adding a call to an encryption function for communications from the application that are intended for transmission over network **240**.

Various functions may be provided by platform library **240**, including authentication, authorization, and determination functions. Device management functions **350** may comprise, for example, functions operative to determine whether user device **100** has been compromised and/or jailbroken, and/or to identify a location of the device via accessing a global positioning system associated with the device. Application management functions **352** may comprise, for example, functions operative to encrypt data and/or communications used by application **310** and wrapped application **320**, to distribute configuration information, to provide authorization and/or credentials, and/or to provide logging and reporting functionality. Content management functions **354** may comprise, for example, functions to update shared content data used by application **310** and wrapped application **320** and/or to provide branding functionality to alter the appearance of application **310** and wrapped application **320**.

Other management functionality may comprise enforcing compliance rules and/or restrictions distributed by compliance server **220**, which may be accomplished at the device, application, and/or content level. Such compliance rules may comprise time, date and/or location based restrictions on accessing user device **100**, application **310**, wrapped application **320**, local assets **156**, and/or remote assets **212**.

In some embodiments, performance of various actions by user device **100** may be contingent on approval, such as may be provided by agent **234** and/or a call to a compliance verification function via API **330**. Such approval may require a determination as to whether necessary resources are available and/or authorized for use to accomplish the action. In cases where the necessary resources comprise metered resources, the compliance rules may enforce restrictions on the use of those metered resources as such resources may be associated with an additional cost to replenish once they are depleted.

FIG. 4 is a flow chart setting forth the general stages involved in a method **400** consistent with embodiments of this disclosure for providing telecommunications data usage management. Method **400** may be implemented using elements of operating environment **200** as described above.

Ways to implement the stages of method **400** will be described in greater detail below. Method **400** may begin at starting block **405** and proceed to stage **410** where user device **100** may receive a request to perform a network operation. For example, an agent application executing on user device **100** may intercept a request to download a web page from a web browser application. For another example, an e-mail application may comprise application **310** and may request a check for new messages. Such a request may utilize API **330** such that the application management functions **352** may be used to process the request. In some embodiments, the operating system **115** of user device **100** may recognize the request as a network request and handle additional processing in accordance with method **400** as described in greater detail below.

From stage **410**, method **400** may determine whether the network operation request is subject to a management policy. For example, compliance server **220** may provide one and/or more policies to user device **100** associated with controlling and/or restricting the ability of user device **100** and/or any applications executing thereon (e.g., web browser app **235**, e-mail client **236**, and/or secure app **237**) to access network **240**. Such policies may comprise, for example, restrictions on exceeding an allocated amount of data for a configurable period, such as a day or billing cycle. The policies may be associated with all data traffic for a given network (e.g., a cellular network, a roaming network, and/or a metered network) and/or the data management policies may be variable based on which application is making the request. For example, a user who is a member of a sales group going into a meeting with a potential customer may have a compliance policy on user device **100** that allows high priority retrieval of sales presentations up to an hour before such a meeting begins and/or any time the user is at a customer's and/or prospect's office location. For another example, a user who is a member of an executive group may have a compliance policy on user device **100** that permits high priority retrieval of all message headers on any network if it has been more than an hour since the last retrieval. For yet another example, a user who is a member of a doctor or tech support group may have a compliance policy on user device **100** that defines all incoming and/or outgoing communications as high priority while the user is on call.

If the request is determined to be subject to at least one management policy at stage **415**, method **400** may advance to stage **420** where user device **100** may determine whether the request is in compliance with the at least one management policy. For example user device **100** may determine that the app making the request for a data communication has exceeded its allotted quota of data. In some embodiments, the management policy may comprise different compliance requirements depending on the type of network in use. For example, user device **100** may identify one and/or more cellular data network and/or one and/or more wireless data networks in communications range of user device **100**. At least one cellular data network may comprise a subscriber cellular network associated with a monthly and/or pre-paid data plan. Another cellular data network, if available, may comprise a non-subscriber and/or "roaming" data network that may incur additional usage charges. The monthly data plan network may permit greater data usage in the management policy than does the roaming data network.

If the request is determined to be out of compliance with the management policy, method **400** may advance to stage **425** where user device **100** may determine whether an override of the management policy has been made. For example, the requested communication may comprise a high priority

communication. In some embodiments, a user's data communications may be considered high priority under a number of configurable circumstances, such as when the user is a member of an executive group, the user device **100** has been out of contact for a given period of time, a message to be sent and/or received is labeled as high priority, the user device **100** is in a geo-fenced location defined as high priority, or a current time is defined as high priority. For example, a user who is a member of a sales group going into a meeting with a potential customer may have a compliance policy on user device **100** that allows high priority retrieval of sales presentations up to an hour before such a meeting begins and/or any time the user is at a customer's and/or prospect's office location. For another example, a user who is a member of an executive group may have a compliance policy on user device **100** that permits high priority retrieval of all message headers on any network if it has been more than an hour since the last retrieval. For yet another example, a user who is a member of a doctor or tech support group may have a compliance policy on user device **100** that defines all incoming and/or outgoing communications as high priority while the user is on call.

In some embodiments, an out-of-compliance result may be overridden manually by the user. For example, user device **100** may display a notification that the request is not authorized and that data may not be sent and/or received until a connection to an authorized network is established. The user may choose to override this restriction by designating a particular communications request (e.g., an outgoing e-mail). User device **100** may also be operative to detect an emergency condition, such as an outgoing call to a police department, fire department, hospital, security, etc. and automatically designate the communication as high priority. Many mobile devices, particularly cell phones, are equipped with an emergency operation mode to allow emergency calls to be placed even when the device is locked or not in communication with an associated carrier's network. Communications in this mode may be treated as high priority.

If the management policy is overridden at stage **425**, method **400** may advance to stage **430** where user device **100** may log the occurrence. For example, a local event log entry may be created comprising details about the communication (to whom, where from, contents, time/date, location, etc.), any incurred charges, and/or whether the communication was initiated according to a compliance policy or by manual user override. The log entry may be submitted to compliance server **220** during a scheduled sync, immediately, and/or once a connection to an authorized network is established.

After determining that the request is not subject to a management policy at stage **415**, or after determining that the request is in compliance with the management policy at stage **420**, method **400** may advance to stage **235** where user device **100** may cause the requested communication to be performed. For example, user device **100** may synchronize with an email server, retrieve one and/or more of assets **212** from asset server **210**, and/or synchronize data with compliance server **220**.

If the management policy is not overridden at stage **425**, method **400** may advance to stage **440** where user device **100** may restrict network access. For example, the requested communication may be discarded without being performed. In some embodiments, a user may be notified of the failure. In some embodiments, a log entry comprising details of the rejected communication may be created, similar to the log entry described above with respect to stage **430**. Method **400** may then end at stage **450**.

Methods, systems, apparatuses, and/or computer-readable media for providing telecommunications data usage manage-

ment may be provided. In some embodiments, a network state associated with a communication network may be identified. Such a network state may comprise, for example, a determination of whether a network connection is active, a determination of whether a network connection comprises a metered connection (e.g., a periodic quota or pre-paid data plan), a type of network connection (e.g., wireless, wired, cellular, roaming, etc.), a calculation of an amount of data used (e.g., data used by a device, a network, a user, and/or an application), and/or a calculation of an amount of allocated data usage remaining. If the network state is in compliance with a data usage policy, the communication may proceed; when the network state is not in compliance, access to the communication network may be restricted. Such restriction may comprise, for example, preventing use of the communication network by at least one application, limiting an amount of data permitted to be transmitted over the communication network, and/or limiting an amount of data permitted to be received over the communication network.

In some embodiments, a request to perform a network operation may be received from a particular application. A failure to comply with a management policy related to a communication network may result in restricted access to the network interface for that application.

In some embodiments, a priority associated with a request to perform the network operation may be identified. A determination may be made as to whether the request to perform the network operation is in compliance with the data usage policy according to the calculated amount of consumed data, the communication network, and the priority associated with the request. If the network operation is not in compliance with at least one of a possible plurality of policies, user confirmation of whether to proceed with causing the requested network operation to be performed may be requested.

In some embodiments, a request to perform an action may be received. Upon determining that the action is associated with a metered resource, a further determination may be made as to whether the request complies with at least one management policy. In response to determining that the request complies with the at least one management policy, the requested action may be authorized and/or caused to be performed. The metered resource may comprise, for example a data communication resource, a power resource, a financial resource, and/or a hardware resource. In some embodiments, modification of an application may comprise introducing new function calls to an application programming interface (API) operative to receive the request to perform the action, such as by modifying source code and recompiling the application to add a software development kit (SDK) library and/or modifying the binary executable of an application via app-wrapping. Such API calls may, for example, modify an application to redirect a plurality of requests to perform action to a second application.

In some embodiments, receiving the request to perform the action may comprise intercepting the request from an application by an agent application. In some embodiments, determining whether the action is associated with a metered resource may comprise determining whether authorizing the action to be performed would consume at least a portion of the metered resource via identifying a plurality of functions associated with the action to be performed and computing an amount of the metered resource consumed by each of the plurality of functions. Determining whether the request complies with the at least one management policy may comprise determining whether the computed amount of the metered resource consumed by each of the plurality of functions exceeds a quota amount of the metered resource.

In some embodiments, a priority may be associated with the request to perform the action. If the priority exceeds a threshold value, but the request is determined to be non-compliant with a management and/or cost control policy, a notification and/or a request for a user to override the policy may be displayed.

In some embodiments, upon receiving a request to perform an action associated with an application, a determination as to whether performing the action will utilize a metered resource may be made. If so, a further determination may be made as to whether the request complies with at least one cost compliance policy and, in response to determining that the request complies with the at least one cost compliance policy, the action may be caused and/or authorize to be performed. Such cost compliance policies may, for example, be associated with a monthly subscription and/or a pre-paid quantity of the metered resource. The compliance policies may comprise a plurality of factors and/or conditions, such as location of a device, time of the request, type of request, and/or category of request (e.g., work or personal).

In some embodiments, user device **100** may identify one and/or more available wireless networks, determine whether any of the available wireless networks comprises an authorized wireless network, and, if so, establish a connection with the available wireless network. One and/or more data communications may then be performed via the authorized wireless network rather than a second network, such as a roaming cellular network. Determining whether the available wireless network comprises the authorized wireless network may comprise determining whether an identifier associated with the available wireless network is included in a list of authorized wireless network identifiers, such as those associated with a master license agreement and/or those that comply with at least one management rule. The master license agreement may comprise a subscriber and/or end user license agreement associated with multiple networks in one and/or more locations, such as a license agreement associated with a restaurant chain that offers wireless network access in its various locations. In some embodiments, the available wireless network may comprise, for example, a telephony-based network, a cellular data network, a Bluetooth® network, an 802.11 compliant network.

In some embodiments, causing the at least one data communication to be performed via the available wireless network instead of the second available network may comprise intercepting the at least one data communication from an application. For example, an e-mail application may attempt a synchronization operation with a remote e-mail server. An agent application and/or an operating system process on user device **100** may prevent the synchronization from occurring over a default communication network until a connection to an authorized network has become available. In some embodiments, causing the at least one data communication to be performed via the available wireless network instead of the second available network may comprise modifying the intercepted at least one data communication into a different format. For example, a text message may be sent as e-mail instead, or a voicemail may be transcribed to text to make for a smaller upload/download size for the data communication.

In some embodiments, an application may be modified to check for the presence of an authorized network before attempting to perform a data communication. Such a modification may be accomplished by re-compiling the source code of the application to include a Software Development Kit with the appropriate libraries and/or using app-wrapping techniques to modify a binary version of the application. In some embodiments, causing the at least one data communi-

cation to be performed via the available wireless network instead of the second available network may comprise denying access to the second network while the authorized network is available.

In some embodiments, identifying the at least one available wireless network may comprise detecting a wireless network access point in communicative range of the apparatus comprising a minimally acceptable signal strength. The acceptable signal strength may comprise a configurable value that may be adaptive to the type and/or priority of the communication. For example, an e-mail download may accept a default signal strength as acceptable, but an emergency communication may accept a lower acceptable signal strength, while a video conference data communication may require a higher acceptable signal strength.

The embodiments and functionalities described herein may operate via a multitude of computing systems, including wired and wireless computing systems, mobile computing systems (e.g., mobile telephones, tablet or slate type computers, laptop computers, etc.). In addition, the embodiments and functionalities described herein may operate over distributed systems, where application functionality, memory, data storage and retrieval and various processing functions may be operated remotely from each other over a distributed computing network, such as the Internet or an intranet. User interfaces and information of various types may be displayed via on-board computing device displays or via remote display units associated with one or more computing devices. For example user interfaces and information of various types may be displayed and interacted with on a wall surface onto which user interfaces and information of various types are projected. Interaction with the multitude of computing systems with which embodiments of this disclosure may be practiced include, keystroke entry, touch screen entry, voice or other audio entry, gesture entry where an associated computing device is equipped with detection (e.g., camera) functionality for capturing and interpreting user gestures for controlling the functionality of the computing device, and the like. The Figures above and their associated descriptions provide a discussion of a variety of operating environments in which embodiments of this disclosure may be practiced. However, the devices and systems illustrated and discussed with respect to the Figures are for purposes of example and illustration and are not limiting of a vast number of computing device configurations that may be utilized for practicing embodiments of this disclosure as described herein.

The term computer readable media as used herein may include computer storage media. Computer storage media may include volatile and nonvolatile, removable and non-removable media implemented in any method or technology for storage of information, such as computer readable instructions, data structures, program modules, or other data. System memory, removable storage, and non-removable storage are all computer storage media examples (i.e., memory storage.) Computer storage media may include, but is not limited to, RAM, ROM, electrically erasable read-only memory (EEPROM), flash memory or other memory technology, CD-ROM, digital versatile disks (DVD) or other optical storage, magnetic cassettes, magnetic tape, magnetic disk storage or other magnetic storage devices, or any other medium which can be used to store.

The term computer readable media as used herein may also include communication media. Communication media may be embodied by computer readable instructions, data structures, program modules, non-transitory media, and/or other data in a modulated data signal, such as a carrier wave or other transport mechanism, and includes any information delivery

media. The term “modulated data signal” may describe a signal that has one or more characteristics set or changed in such a manner as to encode information in the signal. By way of example, and not limitation, communication media may include wired media such as a wired network or direct-wired connection, and wireless media such as acoustic, radio frequency (RF), infrared, and other wireless media.

A number of applications and data files may be used to perform processes and/or methods as described above. The aforementioned processes are examples, and a processing unit may perform other processes. Other programming modules that may be used in accordance with embodiments of this disclosure may include electronic mail, calendar, and contacts applications, data processing applications, word processing applications, spreadsheet applications, database applications, slide presentation applications, drawing or computer-aided application programs, etc.

Generally, consistent with embodiments of this disclosure, program modules may include routines, programs, components, data structures, and other types of structures that may perform particular tasks or that may implement particular abstract data types. Moreover, embodiments of the disclosure may be practiced with other computer system configurations, including hand-held devices, multiprocessor systems, microprocessor-based or programmable consumer electronics, minicomputers, mainframe computers, and the like. Embodiments of this disclosure may also be practiced in distributed computing environments where tasks are performed by remote processing devices that are linked through a communications network. In a distributed computing environment, program modules may be located in both local and remote memory storage devices.

Furthermore, embodiments of this disclosure may be practiced in an electrical circuit comprising discrete electronic elements, packaged or integrated electronic chips containing logic gates, a circuit utilizing a microprocessor, or on a single chip containing electronic elements or microprocessors. Embodiments of this disclosure may also be practiced using other technologies capable of performing logical operations such as, for example, AND, OR, and NOT, including but not limited to mechanical, optical, fluidic, and quantum technologies. In addition, embodiments of the disclosure may be practiced within a general purpose computer or in any other circuits or systems.

Embodiments of this disclosure may, for example, be implemented as a computer process and/or method, a computing system, an apparatus, device, or appliance, and/or as an article of manufacture, such as a computer program product or computer readable media. The computer program product may be a computer storage media readable by a computer system and encoding a computer program of instructions for executing a computer process. The computer program product may also be a propagated signal on a carrier readable by a computing system and encoding a computer program of instructions for executing a computer process. Accordingly, the present disclosure may be embodied in hardware and/or in software (including firmware, resident software, micro-code, etc.). In other words, embodiments of the present disclosure may take the form of a computer program product on a computer-usable or computer-readable storage medium having computer-usable or computer-readable program code embodied in the medium for use by or in connection with an instruction execution system. A computer-usable or computer-readable medium may be any medium that can contain, store, communicate, propagate, or transport the program for use by or in connection with the instruction execution system, apparatus, or device.

The computer-usable or computer-readable medium may be, for example but not limited to, an electronic, magnetic, optical, electromagnetic, infrared, or semiconductor system, apparatus, device, or propagation medium. More specific computer-readable medium examples (a non-exhaustive list), the computer-readable medium may include the following: an electrical connection having one or more wires, a portable computer diskette, a random access memory (RAM), a read-only memory (ROM), an erasable programmable read-only memory (EPROM or Flash memory), an optical fiber, and a portable compact disc read-only memory (CD-ROM). Note that the computer-usable or computer-readable medium could even be paper or another suitable medium upon which the program is printed, as the program can be electronically captured, via, for instance, optical scanning of the paper or other medium, then compiled, interpreted, or otherwise processed in a suitable manner, if necessary, and then stored in a computer memory.

Embodiments of this disclosure may be practiced via a system-on-a-chip (SOC) where each and/or many of the elements described above may be integrated onto a single integrated circuit. Such an SOC device may include one or more processing units, graphics units, communications units, system virtualization units and various application functionalities, all of which may be integrated (or "burned") onto the chip substrate as a single integrated circuit. When operating via an SOC, the functionality, described herein, with respect to training and/or interacting with any element may operate via application-specific logic integrated with other components of the computing device/system on the single integrated circuit (chip).

Embodiments of this disclosure are described above with reference to block diagrams and/or operational illustrations of methods, systems, and computer program products according to embodiments of the disclosure. The functions/acts noted in the blocks may occur out of the order as shown in any flowchart. For example, two blocks shown in succession may in fact be executed substantially concurrently or the blocks may sometimes be executed in the reverse order, depending upon the functionality/acts involved.

While certain embodiments have been described, other embodiments may exist. Furthermore, although embodiments of the present disclosure have been described as being associated with data stored in memory and other storage mediums, data can also be stored on or read from other types of computer-readable media, such as secondary storage devices, like hard disks, floppy disks, or a CD-ROM, a carrier wave from the Internet, or other forms of RAM or ROM. Further, the disclosed methods' stages may be modified in any manner, including by reordering stages and/or inserting or deleting stages, without departing from the disclosure.

Embodiments of the present disclosure, for example, are described above with reference to block diagrams and/or operational illustrations of methods, systems, and computer program products according to embodiments of the disclosure. The functions/acts noted in the blocks may occur out of the order as shown in any flowchart. For example, two blocks shown in succession may in fact be executed substantially concurrently or the blocks may sometimes be executed in the reverse order, depending upon the functionality/acts involved.

While certain embodiments of the disclosure have been described, other embodiments may exist. Furthermore, although embodiments of the present disclosure have been described as being associated with data stored in memory and other storage mediums, data can also be stored on or read from other types of computer-readable media, such as sec-

ondary storage devices, like hard disks, floppy disks, or a CD-ROM, a carrier wave from the Internet, or other forms of RAM or ROM. Further, the disclosed methods' stages may be modified in any manner, including by reordering stages and/or inserting or deleting stages, without departing from the disclosure.

All rights including copyrights in the code included herein are vested in and the property of the Assignee. The Assignee retains and reserves all rights in the code included herein, and grants permission to reproduce the material only in connection with reproduction of the granted patent and for no other purpose.

While the specification includes examples, the disclosure's scope is indicated by the following claims. Furthermore, while the specification has been described in language specific to structural features and/or methodological acts, the claims are not limited to the features or acts described above. Rather, the specific features and acts described above are disclosed as example for embodiments of the disclosure.

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

identifying a network state associated with a device in communication with a communication network;
determining whether the network state is in compliance with a data usage policy based upon whether a user associated with the device is a member of a first user group or a second user group, the first user group associated with a higher data usage priority than the second user group; and

in response to determining that the network state is not in compliance with the data usage policy based upon the user being a member of the second user group, restricting access to the communication network at least one application.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the network state further comprises a determination of whether a network connection is active.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the network state further comprises a determination of whether a network connection comprises a metered connection.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the network state further comprises a type of network connection.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the network state further comprises a calculation of an amount of data used.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the network state further comprises a calculation of an amount of allocated data usage remaining.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein restricting access to the communication network for the at least one application comprises preventing use of the communication network by the at least one application.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein restricting access to the communication network for the at least one application comprises limiting an amount of data permitted to be transmitted over the communication network.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein restricting access to the communication network for the at least one application comprises limiting an amount of data permitted to be received over the communication network.

10. An apparatus comprising:

a memory storage;

at least one network interface; and

a processing unit coupled to the at least one network interface and the memory storage, wherein the processing unit is operative to:

receive a request to perform a network operation from an application executing on the apparatus;

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identify a network state associated with the network interface;

determine whether the network state is in compliance with a data usage policy based upon whether a user associated with the apparatus is a member of a first user group or a second user group, the first user group associated with a higher data usage priority than the second user group; and

in response to determining that the network state is not in compliance with the data usage policy based upon the user being associated with the second user group, restrict access to the network interface for the application executing on the apparatus.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the processing unit is further operative to:

determining whether a file is required for a user associated with the apparatus; and
initiate download of the file to the apparatus.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the processing unit is further operative to:

calculate an amount of data consumed by the application executing on the apparatus, and determine whether the amount of data consumed by the application is in compliance with the data usage policy according to the calculated amount of data consumed by the application.

13. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the data usage policy identifies a configurable amount of data allocated to a plurality of applications, wherein the application comprises a first application of the plurality of applications.

14. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the processing unit is further operative to:

calculate an amount of data consumed by the application executing on the apparatus, and the calculated amount of data consumed by the application executing on the apparatus is associated with a configurable time period.

15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the configurable time period is associated with a billing cycle.

16. A non-transitory computer-readable medium which stores a set of instructions that when executed performs a method executed by the set of instructions comprising:

receiving a request to perform a network operation from an application;

determining whether the application is subject to a data usage policy comprising a plurality of compliance rules; and

in response to determining that the application is subject to the data usage policy:

calculating an amount of data consumed by the application for a time period associated with the data usage policy,

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identifying a communication network type associated with at least one communication network,

identifying a user associated with the request to perform the network operation,

determining whether the request to perform the network operation is in compliance with the data usage policy according to the calculated amount of consumed data and the communication network,

in response to determining that the request to perform the requested network operation is not in compliance with the data usage policy and the user is not a member of a first user group, preventing the requested network operation from being performed; and

in response to determining that the request to perform the requested network operation is not in compliance with the data usage policy and the user is a member of the first user group, causing the requested network operation to be performed.

17. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 16, further comprising:

in response to determining that the request to perform the network operation is not in compliance with the data usage policy and the user is not a member of the first user group, restricting access to the communication network for at least one application.

18. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 16, further comprising:

in response to determining that the request to perform the network operation is not in compliance with the data usage policy and the user is not a member of the first user group, modifying the requested network operation according to at least one of the plurality of compliance rules associated with the data usage policy.

19. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 16, further comprising:

in response to determining that the request to perform the network operation is not in compliance with the data usage policy and the user is not a member of the first user group, requesting user confirmation of whether to proceed with causing the requested network operation to be performed.

20. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 16, further comprising:

receiving user confirmation to proceed with causing the requested network operation to be performed; and
logging a user override of the data usage policy.

21. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 16, wherein the first user group is associated with a higher priority than a second user group.

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